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**THE NATION'S MOST DECORATED MILITARY UNIT,  
THE 100TH/442ND REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM**

**AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT**

by

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## ABSTRACT

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The 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) is the most decorated military unit in U.S. history. Through personal interviews with U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye and review of available historical data, this MSP will attempt to identify the reasons for its outstanding performance, analyze the motivating factors which contributed to its soldiers' gallant efforts, and determine whether the findings can be applied to understanding, developing and training today's Army Reservist.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper will attempt to determine what motivational factors contributed to the gallant efforts of the most decorated military unit in United States history, the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). The call-up and enlistment in World War II for the 100th/442nd RCT was unique because of its homogeneous demographic characteristics and location specific recruitment. In this respect, the unit shares some similarities with current U.S. Army Reserve units. Hence the experiences of the 100/442nd RCT may prove useful in understanding, developing and training today's Army Reserve.

The 100th/442 RCT was made up of second generation (Nisei) Americans of Japanese Ancestry from Hawaii and the mainland United States. The Nisei fought in every theater of World War II. They fought against the Axis forces in Northern Africa, Italy and France and they engaged the Japanese on a limited basis in the Pacific theater. This paper will focus only on the actions of the 100th/442nd in Europe.

The Nisei veterans of World War II have kept much of their experiences to themselves. Today, many Americans, including third and fourth generation (sansei and yonsei) Americans of Japanese Ancestry (whose dads and uncles served with the 100th/442nd RCT), are still not fully aware of their tremendous sacrifices.

Because memories are short and lessons learned are valuable, the writer interviewed United States Senator Daniel K. Inouye, a highly decorated member of

the 442nd RCT, for his personal recollections and thoughts (See Appendices A & B). The writer has also reviewed the U.S. Army Military History Institute's World War II Army Service Experiences Questionnaire completed by Nisei veterans. Finally, several books and articles about the Nisei soldiers were consulted.

## **BACKGROUND**

On December 7, 1941, Japan launched an attack on Pearl Harbor. This dramatic event changed the lives of many Americans. But the most drastic impact was on the lives of many Americans of Japanese Ancestry.<sup>1</sup>

Executive Order 9066, issued by President Franklin Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, ordered over 115,000 Japanese Americans and aliens living in the United States to be incarcerated in internment camps without charges or due process of the law. Over 70,000 were native born American citizens of Japanese ancestry. The others were resident aliens, many of whom had lived in the U.S. from 20 to 40 years but remained ineligible for citizenship under 400 separate United States laws.<sup>2</sup> These included Americans of Japanese Ancestry who were United States' veterans of World War I.<sup>3</sup> Although the Order was intended to prevent Axis sabotage, it applied only to Japanese, not to Italians, Germans, Croatians, Sudanese and other residents with Axis country affiliations.

Prior to Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war with Japan, all Nisei, like any other American youths, were eligible to volunteer or be drafted into United States military service. On June 17, 1942, the Selective Service, on the advice of the

War Department, decided to discontinue Nisei inductions and to classify all Nisei 4-C, "enemy alien."<sup>4</sup>

This exclusion of young Nisei from the services angered many, including Senator Inouye, who was a pre-med student at the University of Hawaii. He felt that he was just as loyal, just as patriotic as any American. With his friends and classmates, he petitioned the White House to let them into the service.<sup>5</sup>

Finally in January 1943, President Roosevelt issued another Executive Order making it possible for all eligible Nisei to join the armed services. On February 3, 1943, President Roosevelt proclaimed:

No loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise the responsibilities of his citizenship, regardless of his ancestry. The principle on which this country was founded and by which it has always been governed is that Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart. Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry. Every loyal American citizen should be given the opportunity to serve this country wherever his skills will make the greatest contribution--whether it be in the ranks of our armed forces, war production, agriculture, Government service or other work essential to the war effort.<sup>6</sup>

Nonetheless, Executive Order 9066 ordering the incarceration of these same Americans of Japanese Ancestry remained in force. The continued existence of these camps totally contradicted President Roosevelt's words. But for the Nisei it offered the opportunity to prove their loyalty.

## **100th INFANTRY BATTALION**

The 100th Infantry Battalion, a unit composed almost entirely of Nisei, was activated on June 5, 1942, in Honolulu, Hawaii. The Nisei soldiers were members of the 298th and 299th Regiments of the Hawaii National Guard, which had been mobilized with the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Interestingly, upon mobilization the Nisei guardsmen's weapons were taken from them and replaced by shovels, brooms, or typewriters. But they were excluded from 4-C classification. Almost all of its officers were white.

The 100th Inf Bn deployed to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, and then moved to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, on January 7, 1943. The training period for the 100th Inf Bn was extraordinarily long. United States leaders remained suspicious and skeptical of the Nisei soldiers' loyalty, so these soldiers were kept out of action by being recycled as many as three times through the combat soldiers' training phase.

Fifteen months after activation, on September 2, 1943, the men stepped down the gangplank at Oran, North Africa. The unit was attached to the "Red Bull" 34th Division. During the next ten months, the unit engaged in numerous battles from Casino to Anzio. Their determination to win led to numerous casualties. They became known as the "Purple Heart Battalion." The unit received over 1,000 Purple Hearts, 33 Silver Stars, 31 Bronze Stars, 9 Distinguished Service Crosses, 3 Legion of Merit Badges and a Presidential Unit Citation for outstanding performance of duty in action.<sup>7</sup>

## **442nd COMBAT TEAM**

The Army then took note of the gung-ho attitude and excellent performance record of the 100th Inf Bn. In response, the War Department decided on January 28, 1943 to form a special Nisei combat unit composed entirely of volunteers from Hawaii and the continental United States. This unit was the 442nd Combat Team.

The overwhelming response of volunteers took many skeptics by surprise. In Hawaii approximately 10,000 men of Japanese ancestry volunteered; however, only 2,686 were needed and selected to fill a Combat Team.<sup>8</sup> Those that were not selected were very disappointed. Senator Inouye was one of the first to volunteer. However, because he was a pre-med student and a member of the Civil Defense, he was deemed essential and turned down. Still wanting to enlist, he left school and resigned his Civil Defense post. He then became the second-to-last volunteer selected from Hawaii. On the continental United States, 1,500 Americans of Japanese ancestry volunteers were selected from behind barbed wire internment camps such as Manzanar, Hart Mountain and Rohwer.

Although by physical appearance and culture it might seem that Americans of Japanese Ancestry from Hawaii and the mainland would be one and the same, in reality, they were two entirely different groups. The differential treatment these two groups received prior to and following Pearl Harbor created two distinct groups. These two diverse groups of individuals were brought together at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.



The average soldier was five feet three inches tall and weighed 125 pounds. At that time, the minimum height for Army service was five feet three inches. However, in the 442nd Combat Team, some volunteers were four feet eight inches and weighed only slightly more than a hundred pounds.<sup>9</sup>

Even the officers, a majority of them Caucasians (with a few Asian Americans) were volunteers. Interestingly, over half of the Caucasian volunteer officers were Southerners. There were no barriers between the Caucasian officers and the Nisei soldiers. They were determined to fight together.<sup>10</sup>

On May 1, 1944, two of the three 442nd Combat Team Battalions were deployed to Europe. The First Battalion, 442nd Combat Team, remained at Camp Shelby as the cadre to train replacements. This Battalion was selected because it was already below manning strengths. Many of its members had already been utilized as replacements for the 100th Inf Bn's casualties.

#### **442nd REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM**

On June 10, 1944, the 100th Inf Bn was attached to the 442nd Combat Team. This resulted in the formation of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). The Regimental Combat Team consisted of approximately 4,000 men. The component units of the RCT were the 100th Infantry Battalion, Second and Third Battalion 442nd Combat Team, the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion, the 232nd Engineering Company, the 206th Army Band, an Anti-Tank Company, a Cannon

Company, and a Service Company. Because of its "outstanding" battle record, the 100th Inf Bn retained its unit designation within the 442nd RCT.

The 442nd RCT's first engagement with the enemy occurred on June 26, 1944, at the Battle of Belvedere, Italy. The 442nd RCT fought in five major campaigns--Naples-Foggia, Rome-Arno, North Apennines, Rhineland, and Po Valley. Over 18,000 Nisei soldiers served in the 100th/442nd RCT.

### **NISEI HEROISM**

The 100th/442nd RCT suffered 3,486 casualties, including 650 soldiers killed in action. The unit fought in seven (including the 100th Inf Bn's campaigns prior to being attached to the RCT) major campaigns in less than two years. They fought against such elite German forces as SS Troops and Panzer Brigades; made numerous bayonet charges; fought off countless counterattacks; rescued the "Lost Battalion" of the 141st Regiment, 36th Division from Texas in the Battle of Bruyeres (See Appendix C); and were the first unit to break through the "Gothic Line" (See Appendix D).

The 100/442nd RCT Nisei soldiers received an impressive array of awards: 1 Congressional Medal of Honor, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, 1 Distinguished Service Medal, 28 Oak Leaf Clusters to the Silver Star, 560 Silver Stars, 22 Legion of Merit Medals, 15 Soldiers Medals, approximately 1,200 Oak Leaf Clusters to the Bronze Star, approximately 4,000 Bronze Stars, 9,486 Purple Hearts, 12 French Croix de Guerre, 2 Palms to the French Croix de Guerre, 3 Italian

Crosses for Military Merit, 2 Italian Medals for Military Valor, 7 Presidential Distinguished Unit Citations, 2 Meritorious Service Unit Plaques, and a Army Unit Commendation.<sup>11</sup>

These were not superman....They could die and be wounded as easily as other men and were. They had the same weaknesses and shortcomings that other soldiers were heir to. Above all, however they had the fire, the courage and the will to press forward that make crack infantry of the line. They would, and often did, drive until they fell from wounds or exhaustion; they were never driven to a backward step in many months of battle.

by: Unknown member of 442nd RCT<sup>12</sup>

The Department of Defense in 1978 identified the rescue of the "Lost Battalion"--The Battle of Bruyeres--as one of the U.S. Army's ten most heroic battles.

## COURAGE

What made the members of the 442nd RCT endure all the hardships of war and maintain a positive attitude towards carrying out their orders? What sustained them as they moved from one harrowing objective to the next? How could they perform so heroically in the face of unprecedented casualties?

Many Nisei displayed uncommon valor. Hundreds of incidents have been recorded and more are becoming public knowledge, but only three examples will be described here to represent their heroic feats.

PFC Sadao Munemori was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. PFC Munemori took charge of his squad after their leader was wounded

and directed the squad to eliminate several machine gun positions. Acting alone, he was successful in silencing two machine gun positions with hand grenades. His actions attracted heavy enemy fire. While seeking cover with two of his companions, an enemy grenade fell among them. He immediately threw his body on the grenade; it exploded and tore him to pieces--killing him instantly--while sparing his companions.

Nineteen-year-old Second Lieutenant Daniel K. Inouye, who earned a battlefield commission, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for valor. His platoon came under intense machine gun crossfire. He got up, charged and wiped out the first machine gun position with a grenade and tommy gun. Even though he was shot in the stomach, he kept on moving, clutching his wound with one hand and throwing two more grenades into the second machine gun position. He clawed his way to the last machine gun position. Just as he was about to throw a grenade, a German soldier stood up and fired a rifle grenade at him. The grenade smashed into his right arm and exploded, nearly tearing it off. His right arm dangled from his side but amazingly his right fist still clutched his live grenade. He pried the grenade loose with his left hand and threw it toward the German soldier who was reloading his rifle and killed him. Disregarding his wounds, Lieutenant Inouye got up and, firing lefthanded, closed on the remaining bunker. He was hit again--this time in his right leg. He refused evacuation until the objective was secured. On this day, the war ended for Senator Inouye. He had lost his arm and he couldn't pursue his medical career.

When I asked what kept him charging up the hill after being wounded, the Senator replied: "It's not motivation. You got your assignment and--believe it or not--you don't feel pain. Here I am, my arm is gone, I've got a hole in my stomach--but no pain; blood all over the place. After it's all over, you ask yourself what a damn fool thing. I don't know what made me do it. But I suppose the juices... For a brief moment all of your training comes in: that you have an assignment, you have a goal to achieve and you do it."<sup>13</sup>

Corporal Yoshio Aoyama, a forward observer, received a direct hit from an artillery shell while helping a wounded companion. The blast blew away both of his legs below the knees. He quickly applied a tourniquet to one leg and the medics took over. In the dark of night, he shrugged off any medical assistance and urged treatment for his wounded companions first. The seriousness of his wounds was recognized too late. He died the next morning and was awarded the Silver Star, posthumously.<sup>14</sup>

The unit suffered an incredible 314% (not a misprint) combat casualties. Most units that suffered 15-20% casualties were pulled off the line and sent home.<sup>15</sup> Yet the young men of the 442nd RCT were sent into combat again and again.

## REASONS

There were many reasons this unit fought as hard and as well as it did. The reasons lie in their culture, common backgrounds, values, and collective training.

They also lie in the clarity of purpose and a shared goal for all members of the unit. The soldiers also enjoyed close support from family and community. Many of these attributes are common to Reserve units today.

### **CULTURE/VALUES**

The Nisei grew up in a strict family-oriented culture. The family unit was very important. Senator Inouye feels that this was the foundation brick of America. He recalls that his father never struck him, but if his father said very softly do something, there was no back talk, the Senator just did it. He knew that his father was the head of the household, a man who worked hard and provided for the family. The Senator was also taught family or collective responsibilities and obligations. He learned early that he must forego certain things and make sacrifices for his younger brothers and sisters.<sup>10</sup>

The values instilled in the 442nd RCT veterans were based on culture as well as their close-knit ethnic environment. During this period, most of the communities throughout the United States were ethnically segregated because the immigrant residents felt more secure among themselves. Therefore, respect for elders and family honor (Japanese cultural values) were easier to instill in the American Japanese community from early childhood.

Just before he reported to Schofield Barracks, Senator Inouye's dad told him: "This country has been good to you. It has given you an education. It has given you a good life. We owe this country a lot and therefore if it means giving

your life for it, so be it. And whatever you do, do not bring dishonor to the family or to the country." Honor was very important to the Senator's dad. The Senator has tried his best to live up to his father's ideals.<sup>17</sup> Not doing your best in any endeavor was considered to be dishonorable--military service was no exception. They felt they were defending the honor of the Americans of Japanese Ancestry.

### On and haji

"On" is at the heart of Japanese culture. It requires that when a person is aided by another, that person incurs a debt that is never canceled. One must reciprocate at every opportunity.<sup>18</sup> Also, the cultural value placed upon "haji" or disgrace played an important motivational factor on the Nisei to meet every challenge, every military duty with total commitment. The two previous examples of PFC Munemori and Corporal Aoyama are testimony to the strength of these values.

A 442nd RCT veteran recalled his mother telling him: "This country has committed a great wrong to you (incarceration in a internment camp), but it does not lessen your obligation and duty to your country."<sup>19</sup> Some may call this a Samurai ethic. My dad, who is still a citizen of Japan, is proud that I, being the only son, served actively in the United States Army and joined the Reserve after my active duty commitment. Years after Vietnam, he still can't comprehend why any American would evade the draft or shirk military service.

## Bushido

Senator Inouye stated that since he was in pre-medical curriculum, they asked him to join the medics. He refused and instead volunteered to be an Infantryman. This was the means he chose to prove his loyalty.<sup>20</sup>

It appears that other Nisei soldiers held the same feeling--Infantry was the way to prove allegiance--because of their Samurai, "Bushido" culture, which valued honor over life. Although highly qualified for other military occupational specialties, most of the Nisei chose to be weapons-carrying members of the Combat Team.

Discipline was no problem. There were no deserters. Senator Inouye states, "I don't know how many combat teams can make that claim after spending over a year in combat." He recalls several AWOLs, but all of them were hospital patients leaving without authorization to rejoin their units--he was one of them. Senator Inouye felt that it was a badge of honor to escape from the hospital.<sup>21</sup>

## Cultural Differences

There were cultural differences between Nisei from Hawaii and Nisei from the mainland. The Nisei from Hawaii spoke "pidgin" English, while the mainland Nisei spoke English that was understandable to all. The mainland Nisei conformed more to the American way of life.

Senator Inouye recalls that during the initial phase of training, there was constant violence between the "kotonks" (mainlanders) and the Hawaii Nisei (Buddhaheads). The senior officers were persistently frustrated in their attempts to



defuse this tension. At one point, the senior military leadership contemplated disbanding the unit because of the constant in-fighting among the members of the team.<sup>22</sup>

To this point, although the Hawaii Nisei had heard of the internment camps, they had little appreciation for what that meant. Then some of the non-commissioned officers from Hawaii were sent to visit the Rohwer Internment camp in Arkansas.

When the Hawaii Nisei saw the camps with barbed wire all around, with machine gun towers, guards with rifles and bayonets, they realized what their mainland brothers had gone through. Instantly, they looked upon the "kotonks" differently--with great respect and great pride.<sup>23</sup> To be faced with such adversity and yet persevere and even enlist embodied the highest values of "Bushido." In fact, Senator Inouye observed that even today many Nisei from Hawaii have asked the question: "Would we have volunteered if we were in those camps?"<sup>24</sup>

Almost immediately upon their return, the 442nd Combat Team became a unified fighting "Go for Broke" unit (slang used in crap games which meant bet all you've got). Several 442nd RCT veterans, especially the "kotonks" remarked about learning the true meaning of the "buddy" system from the Hawaii Nisei. When an individual got into a tough situation, no one abandoned that individual. All efforts were made to get him out of that predicament, even if it meant the helpers risked their own lives.<sup>25</sup>

The majority of the Nisei came from families living under austere economic conditions. This had a significant influence on many members of the 100th/442nd RCT. Senator Inouye recalled that "I didn't realize that we were living in poverty, because everyone else was living in poverty....I think it served to toughen me. Because when things began becoming plentiful, I was in a position to understand the plight of some of those who were less fortunate. It also taught me what often times poverty will teach, that is discipline."<sup>26</sup>

### **TRAINING**

The men of the 100th Bn and the 442nd Combat Team trained hard because all eyes were upon them. In their response to the U.S. Army Military History Institute's World War II Army Service Experiences Questionnaire, many Nisei have stated that they trained harder than most troops because they felt they had something to prove--their loyalty and patriotism to the United States.

The Senator Inouye recalls, "Lots of people questioned our loyalty and patriotism. We knew that somewhere along the line someone had to prove those people wrong. We also knew that this may take bloody sacrifices. So we prepared ourselves for it. And we paid a high price."<sup>27</sup>

They gave everything during training--"Go for Broke." Combat exercises with other units inevitably ended up in hand-to-hand fighting. The Nisei refused to give up and trained as though their lives depended on it.

## **GOAL**

**"The Nisei had a double war to win. They had to prove what any American must prove in time of war: a willingness to defend the nation; but they also had to prove in a special manner that the Americans of Japanese Ancestry were fully integrated Americans."<sup>28</sup>**

**Equipped with definite ideals and intense determination, the men surmounted the obstacles of bigotry and discrimination. They had a mission--an opportunity to win freedom for their families in internment camps and to prove their loyalty by distinguishing themselves in combat. In retrospect, their zeal made them ideal candidates for spearheading thrusts into strongly defended enemy positions.**

**Several veterans have stated that they knew that the senior military leadership outside of their unit viewed them as "expendable" or "cannon fodder."<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, every one of the Nisei soldiers took up the challenge, despite their awareness of being "used." They had their own agenda.**

**Because of their "Go For Broke" spirit, men were often times wounded more than once. For Example: PFC Shiro Kashino got wounded six times and received six Purple Hearts.<sup>30</sup> They often times left the aid station or hospital without authorization to rejoin their buddies at the front. Each Nisei made it his personal crusade to prove his loyalty, and thereby his people's.**

Mike Masaoka stated that "Individual records wouldn't prove much. The Army had said Nisei protestations of loyalty were so much hogwash. We had to have a demonstration in blood."<sup>31</sup>

#### **442nd RCT's SIMILARITIES WITH A RESERVE UNIT**

A few 442nd Veterans may criticize the comparison of the 100th/442nd RCT with today's Army Reserve units. However, the attempt here is not to compare the achievements of the 100th/442nd RCT to those of a Reserve unit. Rather, the intent is to analyze their situations and experiences--to see if and how the 100th/442nd characteristics relate and can be applied to today's Army Reserve units.

The similarities between the 100th/442nd RCT and the Army Reserve units are numerous. Today's Reserve units, like the 442nd RCT are all volunteers. The units are not segregated by racial or ethnic groups, that is, they are not all Nisei, all black, all white or all Hispanic. However, you may find a large contingent of one ethnic group in a unit--attributable to the location of the Reserve Center, demographics and economic conditions. For example, today the 100th Battalion 442nd Infantry is a Reserve Battalion located in Honolulu, Hawaii. The majority of its present members are native Hawaiians. Americans of Japanese Ancestry comprise less than 10% of the unit.

### Education and Skill

The ranks of the 442nd RCT were filled with nearly 20% college graduates. They were engineers, lawyers, teachers, and doctors. The unit also included numerous skilled laborers, such as carpenters, plumbers and mechanics. Their average aptitude test scores were much higher than that required for admission to Officer Training Program.<sup>32</sup> This was probably the most highly educated unit in the Army.

The Reserves are also highly skilled and educated. Many Reservists have individual civilian skills that are transferable to their military occupational specialties. For example, in 1989-91 the 411th Engineer (Combat/Heavy) Battalion, USAR, Honolulu, Hawaii, 80% of its officers were civilian engineers. Almost all of the heavy equipment operators worked for heavy construction companies; all of the cooks worked for various major hotels in Waikiki; and most of the mechanics worked as mechanics in their civilian life.

### Home Town Support

The home town support for the 100th/442nd RCT was tremendous. The 442nd Combat Team volunteers received a great send off from well wishers who lined the streets in their home towns. They received leis, gifts and an "Aloha" parade/ceremony at Iolani Palace grounds before sailing off to the mainland. Almost every soldier's home displayed a "blue star" in the window during World War II. In contrast to the wholehearted support in Hawaii, the mainland Japanese Americans were given only lukewarm support. Although the "kotunks" were also

given a warm farewell by their families, the communities were divided in their support. Internment camp communities were faced with the stark contradiction of being asked to fight for the country that distrusted, feared and unjustly imprisoned them. Still, once they were in the Army, they received support from all Americans of Japanese Ancestry, both in their families and communities. Frequent letters and care package gifts of rice, spam, crack seed and dried squid from Hawaii and the internment camps contributed greatly to the unit's morale.

Homecoming--Finally, Nisei determination and gallantry were recognized. The 442nd's RCT veterans received a warm welcome after the war. They paraded down Washington D.C.'s Constitution Avenue and received the Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation at the White House from President Harry S. Truman. They had great welcome, lots of home parties and parades.

"America opened its arms and embraced us--we were well received and highly regarded," recalls Senator Inouye. "Congress, for example, passed many laws such as the GI Bill. I am here as a product of the GI Bill of Rights--the educational portion. I got my law degree through the GI Bill."<sup>33</sup> When the war was over, many of the 442nd RCT members laid aside their uniforms and became civilians again.

Similarly, during Desert Shield/Desert Storm the Reserve units called to active duty were remembered at home by yellow ribbons, flags, and posters wishing them well, displayed throughout the towns from which they were deployed. Letters and gifts from school kids and strangers addressed to "Any

Soldier" inundated the military mail system. Upon their return to the United States, little and large communities held welcome home parades and parties.

Like the 442nd RCT, Reserve units today are faced with comparable challenges. They too have a double war to win. They have to prove that they are needed and capable of defending the nation as well as the Active Component forces.

During Desert Shield and Desert Storm, most of the Reserve units performed outstandingly. Yes, the 48th Brigade, Georgia Army National Guard had its difficulties. Nonetheless, if you ask any Reserve member, each will say that they would rather be deployed as a unit, even if it does stand out like a beacon.

America's conscience would not have been so dramatically reawakened on the Japanese American question as it was during the latter part of the war if Nisei had been assigned throughout the armed forces.<sup>34</sup> This segregated unit stood out like a coastal light house beacon on a dark night.

#### Promotion Policies

All the 442nd RCT's enlisted promotions were internal because by Executive Order only Japanese Americans could serve in the enlisted ranks of the Combat Team.<sup>35</sup> Today, the Reserve has two types of promotion boards--a Department of Army Board and a local Board. Most of the promotions have been in-house. Because there are no lateral entries into the military, it is difficult to recruit someone off the street with the proper qualifications. Promotion from within is

also a good incentive for the individuals in the unit to keep abreast of military education and have the proper qualifications in the event of a unit vacancy.

## **442nd RCT's EXPERIENCES THAT WILL BENEFIT THE RESERVES**

### **Unit Training**

The 442nd RCT trained as a unit for over fifteen months before being deployed as a unit to combat. During this period, the unit developed cohesiveness and esprit de corp, which were very important to the success of this unit.

Senator Inouye confirmed the importance of deploying as a well trained, cohesive unit. He stated that this was one of the pluses for his regiment. "We trained as a unit, we fought as a unit. And our replacements were all Americans of Japanese Ancestry. So up until the very end, we knew why we were there." He also stated that this was not a make-shift division: "They all knew each other. And like a football team, it takes combined efforts of all. If one person goofs, the whole endeavor may collapse."<sup>36</sup>

The 442nd RCT veterans recall their solidarity: "We shared everything from cigarettes and writing paper to candy bars. We helped each other. Our friends back home knew our buddies in our unit. We had many personal friends in the unit that we grew up with."<sup>37</sup>

### **Personnel Stability**

Like the 442nd RCT, and unlike Active units, the Reserve units have personnel stability. Its members do not rotate to other duty stations. Even though



Reserve units do not train as often as the Active units, they have trained longer as a team. Also, cohesion, comradeship and esprit de corps are inevitable because most of the Reservists come from the same communities. The most desirable way to form a unit is to recruit men from the same locality because there is a special intangible bonding.

"We were raised together, played ball together, hunted together," said Sgt Jimmy Welford, 786th Transportation Company, Mississippi National Guard, whose brother also serves in the unit. "There's no doubt in my mind, if we got in a firefight, we could depend on each other."<sup>38</sup> The 442nd Combat Team was deployed as a total unit. Likewise the members of the Active Army Reserve troop units who have trained and served together should be deployed as a unit. In Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Active Components broke up some of the Reserve units and reassigned personnel. Such policy is definitely a morale breaker. On an individual replacement system--cohesion, trust in each other's ability and cooperative work must be renewed with each new person.

The drawback to having a unit comprised of young men and women from the same community is the grief and sorrow that descends upon a community when a unit is decimated by enemy action. Army policy during World War II prohibited brothers from serving in the same unit. However, there were five brothers in the same 442nd RCT company--one was killed. Several pairs of brothers were killed in the 442nd RCT. Because of the small size of the communities in Hawaii and in the internment camps and because of the large

number of casualties, each community suffered significant losses. Like the 442nd RCT, the Reserve units usually have relatives (Father-daughter, brothers, uncles, or Mother-son) or friends serving in the same unit. In some Reserve units, it is a tradition for family members to enlist and serve together. During Desert Storm, thirteen members of the 14th Quartermaster Detachment, a Reserve unit from Greensburg, Pennsylvania, were killed in a scud attack.

### **CONCLUSION**

A review of the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team's history proves very enlightening. Through its gallant efforts, sacrifices and winning performance, the 442nd RCT demonstrated that an all-volunteer citizen group can be made into a efficient combat unit with proper collective training, clarity of purpose and supportive families and communities.

With the end of the Cold War, there have been significant debates on the build down of the forces and the Active/Reserve force mix. Whatever the outcome, today's Army cannot meet a major contingency/conflict without the Reserve Components.

The Reserves with the "Go For Broke" spirit, attitude and support from families, the community, Active Components, local, state and national officials will be prepared to take on any mission and accomplish it in a professional manner.

It's important to note that public support for World War II and Desert Shield/Desert Storm grew as soon as the "local" folks--the citizen-soldiers--were

mobilized. Some have stated that the failure to mobilize the Reserve early during the Vietnam conflict was a major factor in the lack of public support for the war.

Senator Inouye stated, "Desert Shield and Desert Storm was a success as far as (public) support was concerned. It was not an effort just of the regular forces, you had the Reserves. When you speak of Reserves, you're speaking of little communities throughout the United States. That's America, these small communities."<sup>39</sup>

When called up, they respond. Like the Nisei, the citizen-soldiers are proud. Train them, equip them, ready them. They will serve with distinction.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **UNITED STATES SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE INTERVIEWED BY LTC HIROAKI MORITA ON NOVEMBER 25, 1991**

#### **1. What was it like to be growing up during your youth?**

##### **A. Did your mother work outside the home?**

**Ans.** No, the house was run by a very traditional Japanese gentleman, my father. Although he was brought over at a very early age--he was about two years old when he arrived in Hawaii--He was, in many ways, a very traditional person. He was the eldest son, so he felt responsible for his parents plus his younger brothers and sisters so his load was an extraordinarily heavy one. He had two jobs throughout his adult life until he had a heart attack that made it impossible to continue. All during this time, my mother never worked because my father insisted that she stay home and take care the children. Technically, she spent three hours once working for a wage.

##### **B. Who did you play with (Japanese, Hawaiian, etc. kids)?**

**Ans.** As you find in older communities throughout the United States in the turn of the century, most of these communities were ethnic because they felt comfortable among themselves. You had Irish communities, Jewish communities, Italian communities, Portuguese communities. In Hawaii, you had Japanese communities, Chinese, Filipino communities, white. You found Hawaiians interspersed throughout. Most of my playmates were of Japanese ancestry because we found ourselves gravitating towards these communities. For one thing, in certain places you were not welcome and we understood that. So schools that I attended for example the high school was nicknamed Tokyo High, that is McKinley High School because about 65-70% were of Japanese ancestry.

##### **C. Were there any organized activities after school, e.g. Boy Scouts, etc.?**

**Ans.** I could not afford Boy Scouts but I was a member of the YMCA because it was less expensive. And I was such from the time I was in first grade. But for most of us, especially Asian children, Chinese, Japanese I'll say 90-95% went to language schools. The Japanese went to Japanese

language schools and the Chinese people likewise to their Chinese language schools. So I did so until my 10th Grade when I abruptly got thrown out.

2. What are the most important lessons you received from your parents?

Ans. Well, my parents were not philosophers or intellectuals. Both of them had gone through high school but not beyond that. We did not have a library of any sort. But, as always, parents do come out with words of wisdom that sometimes children don't grasp or appreciate. My parents on two occasions, one a piece, made statements that have provided me with guidance throughout my life. My mother made it very clear to me not only once but on several occasions that no one was "too good for me" that I should always remember that I'm not "too good" for anyone. The first time she told me that was when I facetiously and teasingly asked her if the Emperor's daughter fell in love with and wanted to marry me could I marry her? That's when she told me--no one is "too good" for you. My father on the other hand was a rather quiet person. But on the day we said goodbye, when I had to report to the point of departure to get on the bus to go to Schofield Barracks, he accompanied me, took time off from work to accompany me from home to that spot. Nothing was said until we got off the street car and while walking to the point of departure he just made a short statement. He said this country has been good to you, it has given you an education, it has given you a good life, we owe this country a lot and therefore if it means giving your life for it, so be it and what ever you do not bring dishonor to the family or to the country. Honor was very important to him and I try my best to live up to that. Not to bring dishonor to the family or to the country.

3. In "Journey to Washington," you state that living in Moillili and McCully both played a significant part in your life as a child. What were some of the significant influences?

Ans. I had a happy childhood. I didn't realize that we were living in poverty. Cause everyone else was living in poverty. We had lots of neighbors, good neighbors, a lot of fun. School was a joy. I look forward to school all the time. Church was much more than religious training, it was a social center for me. And there, without realizing you began to accumulate knowledge and experience and certain parts of the moral code often times you learn not from intellectual discussions but from every day practice and examples by your peers or sometimes the adults. At the same time I think it served to toughen me and here again you didn't realize you were going through a process to be toughened. Because when things began becoming plentiful, I was in a position to understand the plight of some of those who were less fortunate. It also taught me what often times poverty will teach,

that is discipline. If you are extremely wealthy and full of everything, you don't have to discipline yourself because everything is there. But if food is limited, you have to make certain that even if they are limited there is three meals, you never waste. There was never waste of food at home. And that has become part of my life. I go to a restaurant, if I order food I eat it all. And as a result you discipline yourself by not over ordering which I think is good. But those who have not gone through this practice don't think anything about buying a huge steak and taking two pieces of it and throw the rest away. I hate to see this type of waste when you know that there are thousands and if not millions who could be going for that. So there are good points in poverty--Discipline is one of them.

4. As a young adult, what was it like to live in Hawaii as an American Japanese, before Pearl Harbor?

Ans. It never occurred to me that I should be concerned because: number 1--we lived in ethnic enclaves so it was not a situation where ethnically you were fighting each other, people were not tossing stones as they do in New York; secondly, I think psychologist will agree with this, in Hawaii we were living in an insular community in which there are really no suburbs, you cannot escape by moving out to the suburbs because there is an ocean around us and so you have to somehow psychologically arrange your life so that you will learn to live with others in a confined space. That's why you have out of necessity more interracial/interethnic marriages than any other parts of the world or the United States. One would have thought that by now we would have had constant racial strife and racial riots. We really never had anything like that. There is bigotry and racism and there is underlying dissatisfaction, jealousies and such but when you have to realize that you must live together or kill each other, most people opt out to live with each other. And so the usual historic enemies or enemies' relationship never worked out. The Chinese and Japanese were supposed to be historic enemies; they are marrying all the time. The Japanese and Koreans supposed to be enemies. I have a Korean friend with four daughters and all four of them have married Japanese. So, the usual type of racism doesn't exist there.

As a result on Dec 7 when even I thought that life was going to become very difficult because those who bombed Pearl Harbor were men who looked like us with same name and same prefectures, to the contrary our neighbors were very understanding and supportive. And I was in the Civil Defense so I had a 24-hr pass and no one made any fuss about that. It was the national government that officially discriminated-Not in Hawaii. It was the National government through selected service that decided that we were 4C, that's enemy alien. Otherwise things were good in Hawaii. Very

few Japanese Americans were sent off to internment camps. It was not the same situation as you found on the mainland.

In Hawaii, I suppose if you evacuated all of the Japanese Americans, the economy would have collapsed. Who's going to work, you know. But I did not experience real hatred and discrimination until after the War. Never got it in training because we were among ourselves, never in warfare because I was in a unit made up of Japanese Americans.

I got my first taste of it--of all places--in Oakland, California. I was on my way home. I was then in uniform with four rows of ribbons, the top one being the Distinguished Service Cross, Captain bars on my shoulders and a hook where my hand used to be in my right sleeve. I went for a haircut, four chairs all empty and the first barber looked at me and said "Are you a Jap?" I said "No, I am an American, but if you want to know, my father is Japanese, my mother is Japanese." "We don't cut Jap hair." Now this is in 1947, the war has been over, you know. If he had any sense, he would have known that I was wounded three times, got some pretty good medals but I didn't want to ruin all that by punching him. If I did I would have killed him, I suppose, with my hook so I just walked out and said "I'm sorry." That's the first time. Never got that treatment in Hawaii. Oh, I get it now in some sly ways during the campaigns, but that's to be expected.

5. Why did you choose to become a pre-med student at University of Hawaii?

Ans. Like most people there is something in your early youth that influences you. If your father was a physician you may want to become a physician. In my case, at a very early youth, I was injured and as a result of an orthopedic surgeon who provided for bone care, I was able to use my arm good enough to enter the service. I had a compound fracture in the elbow and the first doctor who fixed it up, fixed it up so that it was stiff. I couldn't move it and this orthopedic surgeon by skill made it possible for me to use it. So I admired this man--he was Dr. Craig--and I thought well that's a good profession. There were no doctors in my family.

6. How and why did you join the service?

Ans. Well, for many reasons. One, the war was on and the decision was made by the United States government that we were unfit for service, that we were enemy alien. That, though I was very young, angered me to think that as an American I was unfit to put on a uniform. I felt that I was just as loyal, just as patriotic as any American. So I joined several of my friends and classmates and signed petitions and sent to the White House--let us in. And finally in January of '43, President Roosevelt issued that Executive Order making that possible. When he said racism is not a matter of blood or color, it's a matter of mind and heart; Americanism is a matter

of mind and heart. And so he said Americanism is not a matter of blood and race its a matter of mind and heart. So, I was one of the first seventy-five to volunteer but I was turned down cause I was in Civil Defense. I was considered in--what was that designation--some important position so I was exempted. So, I quit Civil Defense and I quit the University also because I was premed and premed was considered a necessity, one of those exempt type of studies. So I quit school, I quit my work. Technically, as a result, I was second to the last to be admitted from Hawaii. My serial number was 30106416 and the last number was 30106417. So both of us got into the same company, same platoon.

7. In what specialties were you trained?

Ans. Infantry, although when we got to Mississippi, I was first asked to join the medics because I was premed and I was in the Civil Defense medical aid station. And I was successful in getting myself out of that. I said "Look I volunteered to carry the gun," you know. And so I was not a medic although I was better trained than most of the medics. So throughout combat, I always carried a medical kit to assist my medics in helping to wrap up people. Second, they tried to get me to go to interpreter school, in Camp Savage, Minnesota. I think, since I finished all the way up to 10th grade, I was pretty good at reading and writing Japanese. They were looking for interpreters. I talked myself out of that one, also. So I got myself in Infantry. That's the way you proved your loyalty. So I knowingly and voluntarily took up Infantry. I began as a second scout, then a first scout, then they made me an assistant squad leader. When we went overseas, I was an assistant squad leader. After the first battle, I became squad leader because my squad leader was killed. Then, on the second battle I became platoon guide and squad leader; third battle, I was the platoon sergeant. Couple of months later, although I was just a Staff Sergeant, I was the platoon leader--at nineteen.

8. What were some of your most memorable experiences while undergoing training?

Ans. There were some aspects of our life that one would say were new. Such as institutionalized and legal discrimination and segregation. I remember about a month after we got there, the whole regiment on Saturday morning, each company got together in company formation. The company commanders all stood before their companies to make an announcement which they were required to do. And the announcement was that the state of Mississippi, the Governor of Mississippi, had just sent a directive declaring that as long as we were in Mississippi training, we who were of Japanese ancestry would be considered white and therefore we



were expected to conduct ourselves like white people and follow the laws accordingly. That meant you sat in the front of the bus, you went to white restaurants, you went to white toilets, movie house you sat on the ground floors and not in the mezzanine. And that was...at first we kind of chuckled over it, we nudged each other and said my god we are haoies now, you know. But it wasn't funny cause it was something new to us. That I suppose...otherwise, other than that training is just tough. I would say we trained just as hard if not harder than most troops because we felt we had something to prove. We had a chip on our shoulder, in a sense. We knew that when we went into the community they would look at us. So training was extraordinary.

There is another aspect of the 442nd which is not too well known. When we first arrived in Mississippi, there were two very distinct groups of Japanese Americans--one from Hawaii which was larger in number and the other from the mainland. Incidentally, in Hawaii about 85% of the eligible men of Japanese ancestry volunteered. That's a large number of volunteers. As a result, although initially they were going to take 1500 from Hawaii, they ended up taking about 2500. And then they took 1500 from the mainland. We were not aware of at that time that these men had volunteered from behind barbed wire cause they were in their camps. This was something extraordinary that very few of us were aware of because of the military censorship. We really had no idea as to what was happening and so in the beginning since we--in Hawaii--were of darker shade (we were in the sun longer) than the mainland guys and we spoken pidgin, and they spoke a better brand of English, and they spoke a better brand of Japanese, at times we thought they were looking down at us. And one thing would lead to another and there was constant violence between these two groups, and we were the ones who were beating up the mainlanders. And that's how the name "Kotonk" came up. We used to laugh every time you hit a guy and he hits the floor, it goes "kotonk."

At one point, the senior officers of the regiment were seriously considering disbanding the regiment cause how could they go into combat with the forces fighting among themselves. And they tried everything--social programs, discussion groups--nothing worked until somebody had a bright idea to set up a project in which each company sent ten noncoms from Hawaii--opinion molders--and all of us had no idea what was going to happen, but we were told we were invited to visit the Rohwer internment camp in Arkansas. And we were there prepared for a fine weekend of "kotonk" girls, good food. When we saw the camps with barbed wire all around, with machine guns towers, men with rifles and bayonets, this was the first time we realized what our mainland brothers had to go through and, instantaneously, we looked upon them differently--with great respect and great pride. In fact, till this day many of us from Hawaii have asked ourselves the question "would we have volunteered if we were in those

camps?" Almost immediately after we returned to Camp Shelby, 442nd became a fighting unit. Then it became the "Go For Broke" outfit. Until then we had no unit in the real sense.

9. What drove the American Japanese soldier to train so hard and tough?

Ans. The answer is obvious, lots of people questioned our loyalty and patriotism. We knew that somewhere along the line someone had to prove those people were wrong. We also knew that this may take bloody sacrifices. So we prepared ourselves for it. And we paid a high price.

10. Were there any disciplinary problems during training?

Ans. The usual types, but one type you never got A-W-O-L. The only AWOL people during training were those who tried to smuggle themselves on the train of the first contingent that went overseas. An advance contingent went there to join up with the 100th who were there already because they were older than us and they were trained soldiers when the war came along. We were untrained civilians but a few were selected to serve as replacements because they had lost a lot at Casino and Anzio. All of us volunteered for that. We wanted to see action right away. But only a few were selected and from my platoon two men tried to sneak out and join up with them. Technically, they were AWOL but no one considered that to be a criminal thing. They trained with us. They had to spend their nights in the brig. Daytime they trained and ate with us. Both of them had to spend about a month in the brig at nights, no weekend passes as such. And when we got overseas there were no deserters, I don't know how many combat teams can make that claim, after spending over a year in combat. We had many AWOL people but those were the ones who left the hospitals without authorizations to return to their units. My records will show that I was AWOL when I was a sergeant because I left the hospital in Rome and hitchhiked at night to get back to the unit. I was sent there for minor surgery. So, you will find that many of the men have AWOL in their records but it was a badge of honor. None of us. In fact when I finally reached the regiment (it took me about three days) and the Company Commander said we just got notice from the hospital that you were AWOL, so consider yourself under arrest and then we will have whatever is necessary after the war and he laughed about it. Nothing happened.

11. What were your first impressions of battle? What were you thinking?

Ans. Well, You go a few days before that, I think all of us going overseas used to pray that we would not dishonor ourselves. There's a fear among men that they might turn to cowardice in the presence of their fellow

men. That's a great fear, much greater than getting wounded. And in my case, I was a Sergeant. I was hoping and praying that I would perform honorably. And the night before the battle, cause we were told that wake up time is 4:30 in the morning and we cross the line of departure at 5:30 and contact should be made at about 6:30, you don't sleep too well because you know very well that if this is going to be combat some of the friends you have known all these years may be dead within hours. The first time I went under barrage we all hit the ground. It was frightening. In fact, the man who was on the ground next to me began urinating out of control because the sphincter muscle goes out of control. He was embarrassed but we laughed about it.

You never get used to it. Anyone who says that he is fearless is insane. But you do your best. You try not to show your fear. You know that everyone is sweating, even in the cold of winter, your armpits are wet. But you smile. Once you get into battle, in the heat of battle, I think your emotions and your juices take over. This is where training comes in, certain things are done out of strict discipline. If I tell a man move to the left he automatically goes. He doesn't look at me and question me and say "hey boy that's dangerous out there." He just goes. If I tell him to "okay lets move forward," and everyone knows that somebody is going to get banged but they all go on. I know that everyone was frightened but once you get into battle, you just plug along. And when it's over you say "pheeew!!! I made it." I was wounded one, two, three, four times. Although I got one purple heart for three of them, all at different times. The first one was about 9:30 in the morning, the second one was about noon, the third one was about an hour later. So, technically, I could have applied for three purple hearts but what's the use. Before that I was hit in the leg by a shrapnel, I'm just lucky.

12. How was the morale of your unit?

Ans. The morale was always high. We knew we were expendable. We knew that we would be constantly on demand as assault troops. I think military reports will show that we were free floating unit. Whoever the Supreme Commander said got us. So, if some area was to have a major assault we might be ordered to go there. We took part in the Southern pass assault and we were the lead forces all the time. And when we got back to Italy again for the last push we were sent there because they wanted a unit to lead the final assault to break the line. Now, they were there for four, five months. The line was almost stationary, didn't move at all. During that period, the Germans naturally had built up great fortifications. We had to bust through that. On the "Lost Battalion," to show you what I mean by we were expendable, this was a battalion of the 36th Division. A Division has three regiments, we were attached to the 36th Division but we were not

from Texas, right. They sent two regiments to rescue the lost battalion. The first one went--they got thrown back, so they sent the second one--they got thrown back. They called us and we were in combat in another sector. They called us back and then we were told to assault the line. Our forces were already decimated because we were in another area of combat. You take for example my platoon before the battle, we had about twenty men, after the battle eleven. That's out of forty-four, now. The "Lost Battalion" suffered nine casualties. We suffered three hundred but we were told to rescue.

13. What kept the soldiers in your unit to keep on moving ahead, you've already proven yourself battle after battle?

Ans. We knew that this proving process would not end until the end of the war. So, we knew it was going to be a costly one. At the end of the Battle, the Division Commander--Gen Dahlquist called upon our regimental commander Colonel Pence (I was then an officer) and directed, ordered our Colonel to assemble the combat team the following day so that while we were in retreat/parade formation he could personally thank all of us and express to us the appreciation of the 36th Division. And he said very emphatically I want all of them out there, I don't want you to be sending out men on passes and such. So we went into retreat/parade formation. All the companies are lined up and Adjutant's call and all of this, we were not too sharp in parades because all of us were just combat types. But, the Colonel caught hell from the General. I was not there but the officers who were there told all of us that the General began tearing into our Colonel telling him "I ordered you to have the whole combat team here and you decided to disobey the order and obviously you sent half the regiment out on pass." The Colonel turned around and said "General, that is all that is left of the regiment." That stunned the General to the point where he could not speak. My company, "E Company, was the largest company, 42 men. That's out of 197 men. The smallest company had twelve men. The Company Commander was a Staff Sergeant. So you can imagine, twelve men, this supposed to be "K" Company, and a Staff Sergeant is in the front saying "K" Company all present and accounted for. And "E" Company is the biggest one about the size of a platoon and then we go on this retreat parade and it looks like a rag-tag, you know, company or platoon marching by. Even the band was cut in half, because the band had to take up their secondary chore which is helping the medics carry stretchers. So, the band was less than half. It didn't sound too good, some of the trumpet players gone, trombone players gone and so when the General realized that he was stunned. Three hundred killed. In other words, in three days we suffered more casualties than in any day in Vietnam, in one battle. That's why the special commission that was selected by the Secretary of the Army to designate ten

major battles of the U.S. Army, one was the "Lost Battalion." There are major paintings in the Pentagon on these ten battles. You'll see one, the 442nd--"Lost Battalion." We had to break through a whole German Division with a decimated combat team. That's pretty good. The 36th Division was so embarrassed that for a long time when they had reunions in Texas they did not have the nerve to invite us over. Now, finally after all those years, they invite us because they were so ashamed. You know we used to say if any battalion in our regiment got surrounded we won't ask anyone else to go out there and rescue, we would do it, right. That's shame, dishonorable. So, we knew we were being sent because we were expendable. It's a harsh thing to say but that was the reality.

14. Did you discuss this issue among yourselves?

Ans. Oh, yes. We knew that. We didn't say it publicly. We were knowledgeable of it. No one told us that but it was obvious.

15. What effect did casualties have on morale?

Ans. We knew what we were in for. We didn't complain, never did.

16. Who were the significant (American-Japanese/non Japanese) leaders?

Ans. There's another aspect of the combat team that very few people are aware of, but it's in the military annals. The combat team was in a real sense a volunteer force. You had one contingent made up of Japanese Americans, even the officers were volunteers, now there are very few Japanese American officers, so obviously you had to go out among the officer corp of the United States Army to get officers. A circular was sent to all of the camps in the United States, all of the forts, announcing that this unit was to be formed made up of Japanese and those interested could sign up. They were not told to go, they volunteered. There were lot of people who wanted to see combat. Over half of those who volunteered were from the South. You would think that they would not want to serve with non-whites. My Company Commander was from Texas. That's the second Company Commander, the first one in training was from Honolulu. But in combat, it was the man from Texas. The Executive Officer was from South Carolina. My platoon leader, before he got hit, was from southern Missouri. And it was the Texan, who gave me the field commission.

17. With so many casualties, you must have had significant leaders who continued to lead the unit?

Ans. We had no General Patton, if you are talking about that. The officer casualties were very high. The NCO took over and some became officers and they got banged up also. But in an enterprise of this sort, you may have someone who inspires you but like a football team it takes combined effort of all. If one person goofs, the whole endeavor may collapse. Same thing in the military. So it would be wrong to say that the man who did it was a Sergeant or the Captain or the Lieutenant.

18. The soldiers of the 100th and 442nd were cited for numerous heroic efforts. What role did leadership, cohesion, discipline, or culture play?

Ans. All, of them played important roles. Training was obviously very important. We had the advantage of training as a unit and going to war as a unit. It was not a made-up division. We knew each other.

19. Could you describe the best example of heroism in the unit that you saw?

Ans. It's a matter of opinion as to what is. It depends upon each individual. A Lot of acts of heroism go unnoticed. The only ones who get medals are the ones who somehow got noticed. And somebody saw fit to write about it. And it also depends upon the company. We had companies that were very liberal with issuing medals. Our company was considerably tight on that. But, then we loosened up after awhile. And I would consider a man who has less courage doing courageous act as being more heroic than someone who is tough doing the same. In a battle, what they should do is give every person a medal. Oh, there are some who temporarily lose their minds and go forward. I got my DSC, but I think in many ways it was temporary insanity.

20. What made you keep on charging up the hill even after being wounded?

Ans. It's not motivation. You got your assignment and--believe it or not--you don't feel pain. Today you get a scratch and you say "ow." Here I am, my arm is gone, I've got a hole in my stomach but no pain; blood all over the place. After it's all over you ask yourself what a damn fool thing. I don't know what made me do it but I suppose the juices...for a brief moment all of your training comes in, that you have an assignment, you have a goal to achieve and you do it.

## APPENDIX B

UNITED STATES SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE  
INTERVIEWED BY LTC HIROAKI MORITA  
ON JANUARY 23, 1992

1. Could you describe what happened when you all came back to the main stream of society after the war?

A. How were you greeted?

Ans. Well, it was a mixed bag. For example: In the hospital community--I was treated very well. I was accorded the very best, and they made me feel comfortable and welcome. I was given all the proper treatment, and courtesy was extended to me. And although it was a military hospital and, therefore, subject to military discipline, it was very relaxed. The community in which the hospital was located was also very friendly and receptive of wounded veterans. So we were always having special gatherings in honor of hospitalized personnel. However, outside this closed community, things were different at times. For example, on my return to Hawaii, I decided to get a hair cut at Oakland. I'd taken a flight to California and from there was to get on a troop carrier. This troop carrier happened to have a large contingent of returning 442nd men so they had me temporarily on active duty as one of the staff officers on the ship. But in preparing for this trip, we had two days, so during the two days I thought I'd get a hair cut among other things. The first barber shop I entered, to the best of my recollection had four chairs, four barbers and all the chairs were empty. In other words, it wasn't busy at all. I walked in and one of the barbers approached me and asked me a question "Are you a Jap?" I said, "If you want to know my nationality, I am an American but my father was born in Japan. My grandparents were born in Japan." And his answer was "We don't cut Jap hair." I was tempted to get a bit violent but I decided not to. After all, having gone through all of the military experience, I didn't want to destroy that with one stupid act of violence. So, I just looked at them and said "I'm very sorry," I walked away. Next barber shop, I got a hair cut. But, I didn't ask these men why they felt that way but its nothing astounding because you find the same thing at this moment. Racism, bigotry is a curse that has been with mankind from almost the very beginning. I don't know when we'll rid ourselves of it, but we are far from it. But, all in all, I would say that main stream America, as you put it, received us, received me with open arms.

**B. Anything else that struck you as being important?**

Ans. Now, when you look back to the days of Korea and Vietnam and compare it to my days; My days were extraordinary in the sense that we were well received, highly regarded. All of us had welcome home parties. There were great parades. When you compare that with Vietnam, when some of my friends had to literally get home in the dark of night, I feel bad for those veterans. But, in my time America opened its arms and embraced us. And that was reflected in every aspect of life. In Congress, for example, they passed many laws such as the GI Bill. And I am here as a product of the GI Bill of Rights--the educational portion. I got my law degree, through the GI educational program. Today, I receive a very generous retirement pay which will go on for the rest of my life. I am the beneficiary of lifetime medical program for any ailment, not just service connected but for anything since I am a retired officer. I can go to any military hospital and get full treatment and all I pay for is the stipend that officers of my rank would be required to. I retired as a Captain, so I pay for what the Captain would pay for food. I think it's something like \$3.00 a day--something like that.

**C. How did the 442nd Veterans Club get started?**

Ans. Well, it was a natural consequence of the war. It would have been surprising if you did not have an organization like that. All the men, not all--most of them, had volunteered. We had a cause, we had a goal. It was worthy of pursuing that goal because the war was just partial success in the sense of ridding ourselves of bigotry and discrimination. Membership was limited just to the veterans. You had to be someone who had served in the outfit. So, in that sense, membership was limited. But, I would say that 90% joined. You always find in any organization about 10% who are not joiners no matter what the cause is. And there were some who wanted to forget the war, set it aside, put it behind them. I have men in my platoon who because of that have not joined up. They do not want to rehash the war.

**D. Was the 442nd Club formed because you were unable to participate in the VFW or American Legion?**

Ans. Well, that was not the reason for creating the 442nd. The 442nd Veterans Club was created almost immediately after the end of the war. In fact, men were already talking about this during the war; let's form an organization when this is all over so we can get together. It became not just a social organization but, indirectly, a rather influential community organization.



In the early days after the end of World War II, some of the old rules that governed the VFW and American Legion were still in effect. For example: The American Legion encouraged the establishment of Posts based upon ethnic background. So you might have an Italian Post named after some young Italian American--Joseph Capanyata-Post Number 13. Generally, most of the members were of Italian descent. There was an American Legion Post in Hawaii, in Honolulu--Joe Takata Post, named after one of the decorated heroes of the 100th Battalion. And we were encouraged to join that and I said, "Look I don't want no part of that, I thought we fought against this." The VFW was not segregated in that sense. The American Legion also had another organization--forty and eight, I think it was an honorary group within the Legion, that made it almost impossible for non-whites to join in.

No, if the Nisei wanted to join the VFW, he could have, there were some. He could have joined the American Legion. Now, today you can pick any Post you want.

2. What "Go for Broke" traits can be passed on to the Reserve Component, today?

Ans. Well, the Reserve unit that carries the number has very little relationship to the original 442nd. They are Reservist to begin with; secondly they are not made up of just Americans of Japanese Ancestry. It's open to all. So you will find that in this organization Japanese Americans make up a minority group. Last time I visited them I would say less than a quarter were Japanese Americans. I think a great number were native Hawaiians, for example. But in their training, I been told that the men are made aware of the history of the 442nd, that the number that this unit bears. It's a proud history, naturally.

3. Do you think that a unit formed from a community has more cohesion when it is deployed in a crisis?

Ans. Well, if the unit itself goes out and serves abroad as a unit, obviously it should have some cohesiveness, esprit de corp. That was one of the--I would say--pluses for our regiment. It was a unit. We trained as a unit, we fought as a unit, and our replacements were all Japanese Americans so up until the very end we knew why we were there.

A. Why were you there?

Ans. Well, because of discrimination. If the Selective Service rules have been open to us, we would not have found it necessary to insist upon a special unit for us. We were "4C"-enemy alien.

6. Did many of your friends join with you?

Ans. Yes, there were many but not all. Some did not qualify, some did not care too. I was in my first semester in college at that time, just on the verge of completing that first semester. In my class, I was in the premed class, I would say 70% of us volunteered. There were 48 of us who made it. Not all who volunteered were accepted. I was turned down in the beginning, so I had to quit school. Quit my work. But of those who were accepted, 48 of us premed, none of whom became doctors because of serious injuries or something like that. So if you look at the school book, the annual, you would see a sudden empty space of MDs in my class, there is a dip. In fact in my squad, in my platoon, I was an assistant squad leader. The other assistant squad leader was also in premed with me and he was killed. The platoon sergeant of the next platoon was in premed and he was badly injured in his hand and he became a chemistry teacher professor. So that's the way I became a lawyer.

4. How can we apply the experience of the 442nd to develop and train today's citizen soldiers, the Reservist?

Ans. Well, the most desirable way of forming a unit would be to take men from the same locality and that way you can have....That's why Desert Shield and Desert Storm was a success as far as support was concerned. It was not an effort just of the regular forces, it was--oh I'll say--half of whom were Reserves. And when you speak of Reserves, you're speaking of little communities throughout the United States. That's America, these small communities. Now, in a huge war like World War II, the original unit might come from a locality. But after awhile, replacements come from all over the place. So, the replacements did not train in the unit. They trained in a replacement depot. And when you train together as a unit, there is obviously a special spirit of comradeship that you will not find in a replacement depot. So ideally, a unit should train together and serve together but you cannot always do that in the military.

A. What do you think about the advancement of the soldier through the ranks in the same Reserve unit?

Ans. Well,...it is always good incentive if you can see that promotions are made in-house and the possibility of getting up there is good; instead of having sergeants brought in from the outside and officers brought in from the outside. So you would know that there was an opportunity. But, in the military, one must keep in mind that once the unit is formed, the only way you are going to get promoted is to have someone die, retire or get

thrown out. And as a member of the unit, you don't want to see this happen to anyone.

I went overseas as an assistant squad leader. The only way I got up there was very simple--the route people get wounded and killed. If they didn't get wounded or killed, I would have returned home as a buck sergeant.

We had a policy that promotions were in-house. For example: In the last days of the war, our replacements were, for most part, noncoms because by Executive Order. Only Japanese Americans could serve in the enlisted ranks of the Combat Team. That made it very difficult because there was a limit as to the number of Japanese Americans in the United States--qualified ones. So, apparently the military, the Army went to every military unit and just picked them out. When they arrived overseas, the established policy was to call in the Noncom. He could be a Master Sergeant or First Sergeant, and say that "You are a senior Noncom here, I have an opening here for a squad leader, would you like to take it? If you do, we would have to obviously bust you down to Staff Sergeant (that was the rank)." It made you feel bad. Here's a guy who may have worked for ten years to get his rank. And he got it because of his dedication and talent, now because of the circumstances of the war....I have,....I recall offering the positions to several Noncom and most of whom would turn it down saying, "Look, I've got no combat experience, I don't know anything about leading a platoon." And so, I said "What would you do?" He said "Well, I suppose I'll be a rifleman." I said "I can't have a Master Sergeant--a rifleman." According to our table of organization--and we have to work within that--the regiment didn't want them in headquarters. They were all filled. So, the places where you needed replacements were all in the front line companies. I sadly had a couple of Master Sergeants busted down to Privates, and that's grossly unfair. I used to call up the company commander and say "Look, I was an enlisted man once, this is so unfair." He said "We can't do anything about it, can't make this guy my First Sergeant, I already got one."

In the beginning most of the officers were white. In fact, at the end of the war, I think the majority was still white. Most of the Nisei officers were very junior, platoon leaders.

**B. Any other things from the 442nd experience can be applied to the Reserve units?**

**Ans.** I think the Reserves are doing well. I've been observing them and I think their training program is good. And I think that it is obvious that it's paid off. They did well in Desert Storm. They had some mix-up, but that was to be expected.

5. From your point of view, what is the role of the Reserve Component in today's Military Force?

Ans. Well, when one considers the budget problems we are confronting, and when one realizes that if defense expenditures are to be cut, in all likelihood the cuts will come in personnel and O&M cause that's the big ones. And if cuts in personnel and O&M are carried out, then the results will be a lean, regular group with a strong, supporting reserve.

6. What are some of the differences between being a youth during your time vs. today such as values and ethics?

Ans. Well, attitude and values change with time--some are for the better and some not. For example: During my time, the family, as a unit, was considered very important in our society. The family unit was, I think, the foundation brick of America. Today, the family has been shattered. For one thing, you have both parents working. Circumstances apparently require that. In my time, parents would grit their teeth and hang on and keep the family together even under the most difficult of circumstances. Today, one slap and they call the lawyer. So single parent families, which incidentally constitutes over 25% of our families, is a common occurrence in the United States. Less than half the people married today will be married for five or more years. I've been married for 43 years. When you look back at my father's generation, divorce was almost unknown. Without a family, without a father figure, without the established disciplinarian, well, the result is almost to be expected--breakdown in discipline. In my time, my father never struck me, but if he said very softly do this, there was no back talk. I did it. I knew that he was the head of the household. I knew that he was the one who worked and provided the resources for us. And I was thankful for that. I knew my position as the eldest son. Today, I wonder if young men, you know, feel that it makes any difference to be the eldest. In my time it was made known to me that I had special responsibilities and special obligations, that I was expected to forego certain things, make sacrifices for my younger brothers and sisters. That's not the case today.

However, on the other hand, notwithstanding the criticism of our educational system, I would say overall the soldiers today are better educated than my time. Maybe some are a little softer. But the Army seems to do a good job. The services do a good job in toughening up the person. They demonstrated that in Desert Storm and Vietnam and Korea.

7. Do you see any similarities between the 100th/442nd and the Reserves?

Ans. No. First of all there is a difference between the 100th and the 442nd. You have similarities, both units were made up of Japanese

Americans, but one group prides itself in that they were volunteers; and the 100th were not volunteers, they were draftees or National Guard. The 442nd were all volunteers. Maybe that's a fine difference but it is a difference. Difference in age, the original unit, the 100th, was much older. For example: My uncle was in the 100th. The average age of the 442nd was much younger than the 100th.

Unless you form a Reserve unit from a given community and made up of one ethnic group (that's against the law), and you made it up of people who have suffered from discrimination (but you won't find that now). See during those days you had black divisions, you had Puerto Rican regiments-- 65th Regiment was from Puerto Rico. The 92nd Division was a black division in Europe. I believe there was another division in the Pacific that was black. There were certain quartermaster outfits that were all black. In fact, there was a squadron of pilots that were all black. Today, you won't find them. Only similarity is that they put on the same kind of uniform.

The 442nd didn't come from the same community. We came from throughout the country. A large number came from Hawaii, but Hawaii has many communities. I don't think there were enough in my immediate community to make up a platoon. They came from all over the neighbor islands. And they were many men from California, Arizona, New Mexico, all over the place Illinois, New York, it was not from a given community.

In the Reserves, you usually have it from the city of Honolulu or the town of Wailuku-Kahului, or West Maui or East Maui or East Hawaii. So you would have a special, unique relationship based upon a community, but the 442nd you didn't have that. Furthermore, all of the fellows from Wailuku did not serve in one company. They were scattered all over the place.

## APPENDIX C

### The Battle of Bruyeres

The First Battalion of the 141st Regiment of the 36th Division was cut off and surrounded by German (SS and tankers) soldiers. All efforts to rescue this unit by the Second and Third Battalions of the 141st had failed. The 442nd RCT, fighting in a area completely removed from the 141st Regiments' area of operations, was called upon and ordered by the 36th Division Commander, Major General John E. Dahlquist, to rescue the "Lost Battalion" at all costs.

After five tough days of fighting, the 442nd RCT reached the "Lost Battalion" with a "fixed bayonet" assault on the German force entrenched in their defensive perimeter. The trapped Battalion had been without provisions for eight days. Only 270 of 800 soldiers were left.

In this action, the 442nd RCT suffered a total of 1,400 casualties--men killed, wounded or missing in action to rescue the 270 soldiers of the "Lost Battalion." At roll call, I and K Company of the 442nd RCT each with over 200 men prior to the battle, ended up with nine and sixteen soldiers "present or accounted for," respectively.

Members of the 442nd RCT still question the burden laid on them to rescue the "Lost Battalion" when the rest of the 141st Regiment was not assigned the same mission.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **The Battle of the Gothic Line**

During the last few months of the war, the Germans maintained their last stronghold in a mountain region in Central Italy called the Gothic Line. They had fortified this mountaintop fortress for years with machine gun nests, tank traps and pillboxes. The Army attempted to take this impregnable fortress with two full Divisions (34th and 92nd Divisions). For six months, they failed.

Gen Mark Clark, Fifth Army Commander, asked Gen Eisenhower to assign the 442nd RCT to spearhead the attack. The request was granted, and the 442nd RCT was recalled from France back into Italy. Although the 34th and 92nd Divisions had failed to break the Gothic Line for months, the 92nd Division tasked the 442nd RCT to break through the Gothic Line within a week. The 442nd RCT reconnoitered the area and its commander is quoted as saying to the Division Commander, "We'll do it in 24 hours" to the Division Commander.

The 442nd RCT attacked and secured the mountain top in 32 MINUTES by scaling, during darkness, a 3,000 ft sheer vertical cliff which the Germans and the Allied 34th and 92nd Divisions thought was impregnable.

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